

Case 2619

***Scorpaenichthys marmoratus* Girard, 1854 (Osteichthyes, Scorpaeniformes): proposed conservation of the specific name and confirmation of authorship**

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Abstract. The purpose of this application is to fix the authorship of *Scorpaenichthys marmoratus*, a species of sculpin that was independently described twice with an identical name and in the same year. It is proposed to conserve *Scorpaenichthys marmoratus* Girard, 1854, and to suppress *Hemitripteris marmoratus* Ayres, 1854.

1. The eastern North Pacific marine fish species commonly known as the cabezon (family COTTIDAE) is commercially and recreationally important and occurs from central Baja California to southeastern Alaska. It has been known scientifically by the name *Scorpaenichthys marmoratus* for about 135 years, yet the authorship remains in doubt.

2. *Scorpaenichthys marmoratus* Girard, 1854, and *Hemitripteris marmoratus* Ayres, 1854, were independently described but are the same species. Furthermore, the names were published within weeks or perhaps days of each other.

3. The paper in which Girard described *Scorpaenichthys marmoratus* (new genus and species, type by monotypy) was read before the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia at the meeting of 1 August 1854, and published in the *Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia*, probably in September, but perhaps in early October or possibly in late August. Copies were acknowledged as received by the New York State Library in a letter dated 7 October 1854 (see 10 October meeting, in *Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences*, 7(4): 173) and receipt acknowledged by the American Philosophical Society in a letter dated 20 October (see Nolan, 1913, p. xi). No additional information on date of publication is available from the Philadelphia Academy (E. Böhlke, pers. comm.).

4. The paper in which Ayres described the new species *marmoratus* in the established genus *Hemitripteris* (misspelled *Hemitripteras* by Ayres) was read about one month later at the meeting of the California Academy of Natural Sciences on 4 September 1854. The account was published on 8 September in a San Francisco newspaper, *The Pacific*. Articles appearing in *The Pacific* were shortly thereafter incorporated verbatim into the *Proceedings of the California Academy of Natural Sciences* (Vol. 1, part 1,

containing Ayres' article, is dated 22 September), but the date for Ayres' *marmoratus* is clearly 8 September. This very possibly precedes Girard's published account of *marmoratus*, although there is insufficient information to establish a precise date of publication for Girard's description. Since neither author mentions the other, and since both describe the species as new and their descriptions differ in minor details, we assume that the descriptions and name selection were made independently (the marbled color pattern being characteristic of the species). Both have a type locality of San Francisco, California. Ayres' type was presumably lost in the fire of 1906 that destroyed the California Academy's collection. Girard (1854) did not list specimens, stating only (p. 129), 'collected by Dr A. L. Heermann' and (p. 131), 'several specimens were procured ... from San Francisco.' Based on Girard (1858, p. 65), USNM (United States National Museum of Natural History) 314 contained 3 syntypes; USNM 314 (examined by us on 27 June 1987) now contains two specimens.

5. Although Ayres is most often listed as the author of the species in recent literature, a survey of several pertinent publications on North American fishes illustrates the confusion in the literature with regard to authorship, although all workers agree that there is but one species. The following attribute authorship to Ayres: Robins et al. (1980, p. 62), Hart (1973, p. 540), Jordan et al. (1930, p. 382), Jordan & Evermann (1898, p. 1889). The following regard Girard as the author: Hubbs et al. (1979, p. 20), Fitch & Lavenberg (1971, p. 59), Bolin (1944, p. 6).

6. There is only one species in Girard's genus *Scorpaenichthys* (type species *marmoratus* Girard). To attribute the species name *marmoratus* to Ayres, perhaps of slightly earlier date, therefore causes considerable confusion, especially in reference to the type species of *Scorpaenichthys*. Suppression of *marmoratus* Ayres would therefore lead to stability and eliminate problems in this unusual case of homonymy and synonymy.

7. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the specific name *marmoratus* Ayres, 1854 as published in the binomen *Hemitripteras* [sic] *marmoratus*, for the purposes of both the Principle of Priority and the Principle of Homonymy;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *Scorpaenichthys* Girard, 1854 (gender: masculine), type species, by monotypy, *Scorpaenichthys marmoratus* Girard, 1854;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *marmoratus* Girard, 1854, as published in the binomen *Scorpaenichthys marmoratus*;
- (4) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the name *marmoratus* Ayres, 1854, as published in the binomen *Hemitripteras* [sic] *marmoratus* and as suppressed in (1) above.

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